

LUCHA LIBRE WEEKLY

TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 1992

\$1.00 PER ISSUE - 1427 WEST DICKENS AVE - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60614

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 16

EMLL RETURNS TO LA ARENA MEXICO

Jose "el Negro" Casas joins rudo dream team in semifinal

Actually, I was kind of stuck for a headline story this week. Would it be the continued growth of the AAA? The debut of el Hijo del Santo with the AAA? The Galavision AAA debut? The debut of Jose "el Negro" Casas with the EMLL? I finally settled on a story examining the state of Mexico's oldest and still-largest promotion one month after the formation of its newest rival as the EMLL returns to its main arena for a seven week tour. And I'll get to the rest.

The AAA has gotten off to a faster start than anyone, most of all the EMLL, had expected. Originally, the AAA was able to book arenas only in the interior of Mexico and only one night per week. Now it appears as if they have enough wrestlers and enough eager arena managers to run three weekend nights and at several arenas. The head of steam generated by the AAA has caused the EMLL to lose in several areas.

First, they have lost many of their best workers: Octagon, Fuerza Guerrera, the mini-super-estrellas, los Destructores, el Volador, el Misterioso, Canelo Casas, and many others. Second, they have also lost some of their biggest names, including Konnan el Barbaro, Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo, la Mascara Sagrada, and los Hermanos Dinamita. Third, they have lost their time slot and channel on Televisa, moving from the powerful channel 2 at noon on Sundays to lesser channel 9 at 5:00 Saturday afternoons. Fourth, the wrestlers who remain have lost faith in what has been openly described as a corrupt union. Lastly, the EMLL has lost Antonio Pena, and this may be the biggest loss of all. Pena, when he was teamed with Paco Alonso and Juan Herrera, ran a promotion that caught and surpassed a solidly entrenched UWA rival to become Mexico's number one promotion.

What tools does the EMLL have left to fight with? There are many. They have the finest arenas in the largest cities in the country to run revenue-drawing house shows in. They have the considerable talents still of over 100 wrestlers, including many of the best workers in Mexico, particularly on the rudo side (Jose "el Negro" Casas, Bestia Salvaje, Jerry Estrada, Emilio Charles, and el Pirata Morgan for starters). They still do have a television time slot, which they didn't a year ago. They have the not inconsiderable advantage in Mexico of tradition. They have ties with some of the best promoters and trainers in other cities to bring in fresh talent if things get stale. And they have a number of issues, as covered last week, ready to go from the frying pan into the fire.

That leads us into a discussion of the opening card of the spring/summer tour of la Arena Mexico. The EMLL returned after being absent since April 5th and re-opened the doors on Friday night, June 5th, 1992, for a card consisting of three regular matches and a tournament.

First, the tournament. Sixteen luchadoras were selected to participate in the CMLL (Consejo Mundial de la Lucha Libre) Ladies' World Heavyweight Wrestling Championship tournament. The concept was as follows. On Friday, June 5, 1992, 8 luchadoras would enter an over-the-top-rope battle royal and battle until one lady was left in the ring. On June 12th, the remaining eight ladies would have their battle royal. The two survivors would battle in a singles match on Friday, June 19, 1992, at la Arena Mexico, for the CMLL Belt. The first round came off without a hitch as these eight ladies were the ones scheduled to enter the fray: Bull Nakano (WWWA World Champ) from Japan, la Guerrera Pupura, la Diabolica del Caribe, and Maria del Angel represented the rudas. The tecnicas were Xochitl Hamada, Kaoru Maeda, Lady Apache, and Zuleyma (UWA World Champ). Next Friday's eight ladies will be: tecnicas Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales, Selene, Atenas, and la Sirenita; and rudas Wendy la Guerrerilla, Neftali (Mexican National Champ), and la Pantera Surena and Martha "la Aplandora" Villalobos (Mexican National Parejas Champions). Clearly Nakano and Gonzales would be favored to reach the finals.

Thanks to reader David Scherer of Marmora, New Jersey, I do in fact have the results of the Friday night EMLL show. If any of you are interested in trading for the EMLL show with Dave, his address is Post Office Box 612, Marmora, New Jersey, 08223-0612. The first television match saw rudos Sangre Chicana, Emilio Charles junior and captain la Bestia Salvaje defeat the tecnico team of el Trio Metalico (Bronce [ex-la Mascara], Plata, and captain Oro). The first fall went to the rudos when Oro went to the top rope to do his "quebrada" (moonsault bodyblock out of the ring) onto la Bestia Salvaje, who was being held by Plata. Salvaje moved, Plata got hit, and both Oro and Plata were

I also want to comment on the AAA show that aired on Galavision, but first, as many of you saw right before the show, Galavision announced that EMLL would return next week. What I believe will happen, since the satellite shows were ninety minutes this week, will be this: EMLL will air the 6/5/92 card reviewed on page two next Sunday on Galavision, 6/14, at 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm PDT (7:30 pm to 9:00 pm EDT). Then, AAA should air from 6:00 pm PDT to 7:30 pm PDT. Now I am not certain of this but by speaking to three people and reviewing my notes, this is my best guess as to what will happen.

On to the review of the show held Friday, May 29, 1992, in Veracruz, Veracruz, at el Auditorio Benito Juarez after the introduction from babyface announcer Morales and rudo announcer Rivera, we had our opening match. Here tecnicos Winners and Super Calo defeated Los Hermanos Maldad (Mister Maldad and Doctor Maldad). The match went three falls and went 11:26. The first fall went to the tecnicos as Super Calo was a winner via count out of the ring over Doctor Maldad after Super Calo did a tope suicida and flew into the second row of chairs at ringside. The second fall went 4:36 before Mister Maldad did a beautiful spinning half-twist off the top rope diving body press on Super Calo. The third fall went 3:01 before both tecnicos did sensational dives and both rudos were counted out. Super Calo did a plancha outside the ring after almost slipping in climbing to the top rope. Winners did what will be billed as "el lance de la semana" in his tope suicida at the end, an "Air Pillman" a la Eddy Guerrero but outside the ring. Not a great match amongst these rookies but some good spots and some spectacular dives. ** 1/2. Now people can see why I like Winners so much.

The next match had tecnicos Super Star, el Giro, and captain el Colorado defeating Heavy Metal (ex-el Canelo Casas), el Brazo de Platino, and captain el Picudo, in three falls in 16:45. El Brazo de Platino's mask looks so old-fashioned compared to the rest here. And what was Heavy Metal wearing? Cloth sunglasses? The first fall went 8:23 before Super Star pinned el Brazo de Platino with an off of the top rope tope en reversa diving head butt. The second fall went 5:09 before el Brazo de Platino did a nice off of the top rope senton onto el Giro. Boy, Bill Watts wouldn't like this federation. The final fall went 3:13 before el Giro pinned el Picudo with an Asai moonsault bodyblock ("la quebrada") that just barely found its mark. One of the funny spots was Pepe Casas warning Heavy Metal about a kick that was almost a low blow. Not often you see a father refereeing a son's match (not counting Sandy Barr). Super Star did a big dive into the chairs. Lots of big dives at the end. No one was hurt though on any dive. And I still think Erick Casas is one super worker. ***.

The semifinal saw the veteran's squad come out. The tecnico team featured captain Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo (age 46), el Solar I (age 37), and Super Muneco (the "baby" at age 32). They defeated the rudo squad of captain Cien Caras (age 42), Fishman (age 41), and "el Chacho" Herodes (age 37). The match went three falls and 20:13. Herodes came to the ring with his biggest fan, get it? The first fall went a long 10:39 before Super Muneco surprised Cien Caras with a clean small package. Cien Caras reversed the tables and pinned Super Muneco with a three-quarter nelson hold in 5:04. The third fall went 4:30 before Fishman, primarily, was disqualified. The ruling was one that I have never heard of before. All three rudos did a plancha at once onto Muneco and the rudos were disqualified by senior AAA referee Pepe "Mister Justo" Casas for "using excessive force." Just a guess, but my guess is they pulled that finish out because they want to set something up in the future and use it down the road. This was a good match, not great, with Aguayo renewing ancient feuds with both Cien Caras and Fishman.

The main event featured the Mexican National Light Heavyweight Championship Title match that I had covered last week. I got the finishes right but the middle part of the match was not so wild as I had suspected. Clearly it was a cheap finish to disqualify a wrestler for a battle amongst the seconds. Anyway, Universo Dos Mil defeated la Mascara Sagrada to win the title in three falls in 13:32. The first fall ended in 5:26 when Sagrada made Universo submit cleanly to the figure-four leglock. The second ended in a clean pinfall in 3:16 when Mascara did a tope suicida, missed Universo, and nailed Superstar; Sagrada was then thrown back in the ring and with the jackknife Universo pinned Sagrada. Cien Caras did interfere in the first two falls but he did not affect the outcome of either one, really. The third fall went 4:50 before Sagrada was disqualified because "illegal" second Aguayo fouled "legal" second Cien Caras. I wish Universo Dos Mil had acted more happy that he had won that title to put some heat on the situation; he acted like he barely cared. Maybe they were afraid of too much heat for a cheap finish though. The fans did not seem too overly upset, though. This was a fine match and a fine story but a cheap finish. The finish may have been good for business but not for my grade. All in all, **.

This is the third AAA show that there has been and the third that I have seen. This one had the worst graphics, the worst lighting, and the worst announcing of the three. Bring back super ring announcer Armando Gaytan! On next week's TV, the EMLL uses the graphics that the AAA used on the first show, which seemed brighter and fresher than this one. This AAA show was a far sight better than the UWA shows of 1992, but was not so good as the EMLL Arena Mexico shows and was not even so good as its very own first two shows. Starting next week, we will get to see the two shows (EMLL and AAA) back to back and will get to compare them in all aspects. I wouldn't count out the EMLL just yet, nor would I the AAA. I bet we're in for a nice long little war between the two of them! And I would think this competition is going to be great for the fans in both Mexico and the United States.

MINI-BIOGRAPHY: SAIGON DRAGON. EL ULTIMO DRAGON

Saigon Dragon's real name is Yoshihiro Asai. He was born on December 12, 1966, in Nagoya city, Aichi prefecture, Japan. He had originally wanted to become a professional wrestler while watching the original Tiger Mask (Satoru Sayama) in action. Since Tiger Mask worked for the New Japan promotion in Tokyo, Asai packed up his bags, went to Tokyo, and enrolled in the New Japan training camp. He didn't make it and was "let go." This was in 1986. In 1987, Asai found his way to Mexico City to make a second try at the sport that he so loved. He caught on with the wrestlers in the UWA promotion, who at that time were trading talent back and forth with New Japan. Asai trained hard and finally was ready for his debut. Since he was Japanese, and there were two other Japanese stars in Mexico City on a tour at that time, Asai for his opening match was paired with them. The partners were Naoki Sano and Hirokazu Hata. They faced the original "Misioneros de la Muerte:" el Signo, Miguel "el Negro" Navarro, and el Texano. The match was held May 13, 1987, at la Arena "La Aficion" in Pachuca, Hidalgo. The Japanese lost. From then on, though, Asai has not lost much in Mexico. He quickly became known as the most spectacular of the Japanese working in Mexico and seemed to crave the high-risk flying. Quickly he won his first title. On July 29, 1988, not fifteen months after his professional debut, Asai won the UWA World Welterweight Championship, by defeating Rey Richard at the "el Cortijo" bull ring in Mexico City. He defended the belt several times before dropping it to move up in weight class. On March 1, 1990, the UWA, under the leadership of native Japanese Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada, opened an office in Japan under the name "Universal Wrestling Federation" and began promoting quarterly lucha libre cards in Japan. Asai was by design the big native star, returning as the conquering hero, a position he earned on merit anyway. On April 6, 1990, Asai defeated el Cuchillo (Jaime Carillo) to win the UWA World Middleweight Championship. Just five weeks later, Asai dropped the strap back to el Cuchillo to set up two big stipulation matches in Japan. When the UWA returned for its second tour in June 1990, Asai won both big matches. First he won the UWA World Middleweight Championship back. Then, he also won the mask of el Cuchillo (who had already lost that mask in Mexico), revealing him to be Carillo, who had also previously worked under the ring name "el Polaco." After a while, the UWA basically decided they had no more push for Asai. On December 28, 1990, at el Auditorio Municipal in Tijuana, Baja California Norte, Super Astro defeated Asai via count out of the ring in the third fall to win the UWA World Middleweight crown, a title he would hold for one month before losing it to the current champion, Jose "el Negro" Casas. Asai floundered around a while in the UWA. Then-EMLL-Vice-President Antonio Pena made several entreaties to Asai and on September 30, 1991, Asai signed an exclusive long-term contract with both the EMLL in Mexico and the SWS office in Japan; at the same time, the EMLL and the SWS offices signed a talent-exchange program. Asai was the key player in all these transactions. It has been reported that whatever money is in Asai's contract makes him the highest-paid foreign wrestler ever to work full-time in Mexico. The EMLL had a big debut planned for Asai for October 18, 1991, at la Arena Mexico, under a hood as Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon, "long-time friend of Octagon." The UWA office was extremely upset at losing all the talent that they had to the EMLL in 1991 and finally found a way they could strike back. When a foreigner works in Mexico, he must obtain a valid, renewable work permit. He must by law when he begins work surrender that permit to his employer to ensure the employer of some rights to the extranjero's labor. Well, UWA President Carlos Maynes refused to return Asai's work permit to Asai and refused to forward it to his new employer, Antonio Pena. Therefore, Asai could not work for the EMLL. Even last-minute bargaining failed to persuade Maynes to release the permit. Apparently, since Asai's new contract was legal, he could by law apply for a new permit, but the time frame involved would not allow the paperwork to be completed in time for the previously announced debut. Instead of debuting in the match, Dragon came to the ring with Octagon and was attacked before he got to the ring by Masakre; the resulting angles led to the split of the "Infernales" tag team and eventually the creation of the "Intocables" tag team. Dragon returned to Japan to work one last card for Universal, under the stated reason that tickets had been sold based primarily on the fact that Asai was advertised to be wrestling there that night, and so Asai fulfilled his contractual duty. He then switched to SWS rings in October, November, and December 1991, wrestling versus such stars as Emilio Charles junior, la Bestia Salvaje, and Jerry Estrada. The Estrada match, held December 12, 1991 at The Tokyo Dome, turned out to be rated the best match of that show by many fans. In 1992, Asai has been in many main events in EMLL rings but has not quite got the mega-push that was expected by me or one might have thought based on the monetary value and undeniable importance of his contract. The rest of this sentence is an educated guess, but I believe that Asai had been booked to win the NWA World Light Heavyweight Championship from Lizmark in Tokyo at the big show held April 16th at The Tokyo Coliseum. In fact, Japanese magazine *Weekly Gong* virtually guaranteed it. But by April 5th, it was obvious behind the scenes that the EMLL split was underway; EMLL president Paco Alonso put that NWA belt into the hands of his ultimate right-hand man, el Satanico, essentially for safe keeping until the storm from the split settled down. Asai then had a match the 16th in Tokyo as billed, but versus el Satancio and not Lizmark, and Asai lost, not won. The match was good but the finish was a real turn-off to the fans, as there were essentially two cheap finishes in one match, a double pin and a count out. Asai is staying with the EMLL in the split, however, and the EMLL/SWS alliance is still quite solid. Once things settle down, which should be soon, I would not be at all surprised to see Asai have another chance at that NWA belt in Tokyo and I suspect that if there is another title chance for Asai in Tokyo, or even in Mexico City, Asai would likely be crowned the new champion. It is his time.

UWA

Here is the latest scoop on Mexico's third-largest federation:

* The card held Thursday, June 4th, at la Pista Arena Revolucion in Mexico City, was headlined by a mascara contra caballera bout. El Celestial put up his mask versus the hair of la Demonia Arrieta. I am sure el Celestial won. That is because he used to wear a mask as Blackman and then lost that mask. It is considered unethical to wear a mask, lose it, and put on another one in Mexico because it devalues the mask match itself. So el Celestial "can't" be revealed as Blackman and must have won. This is the same reason Transformer, ex-Kendo, had to beat Zeus last week. The semifinal had Canek, Rambo, and The Killer (managed by Andy Barrow) face los Puertorriquenos (Ricky Santana, el Gigante Warrior, and Miguelito Perez junior). The tercera saw UWA World Trios Champions los Nuevos Misioneros de la Muerte (The Black Power II, Miguel "el Negro" Navarro and el Signo) face off in a non-title match versus Eddy Guerrero, el Villano III, and el Texano. Silver King teamed up with el Coloso and el Tigre Canadiense (Mike Lozansky) in the segunda to face el Engendro, Zeus (Andres Solano, ex-Baby Richard), and Shu, el Guerrero. The inicial had a mano a mano between el Principe Maya (Canek's next oldest brother) and el Gran Calcuta.

* Also on Thursday, June 4th, the UWA ran la Arena Toluca in Toluca, the capital of the state of Mexico. The main event featured el Hijo del Santo in what was billed as his last match in the UWA. He teamed with Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada to face Doctor Wagner junior and Jose "el Negro" Casas. Casas was not being billed as in his last UWA match. The semifinal had a match I know from experience should have been super. All four of las Muchachitas (Rudy "Perfumado" Reyna, Pimpinela Escarlata, May Flowers, and Casandro) faced all four of los Tortugillos Karatekas (Donatelo, Leonardo, Miguel Angel, and Rafael). No tercera as there were only four matches on this card. The segunda had el Rayo Tapatio I teaming with el Ninja Sasuke ("Masa Michinoku" in Japan) versus Momotaro ("Monkey Magic Wakita" in Japan) and Kahos junior. The opener had el Futuro versus Frayle Top.

* On Friday, June 5th, at la Arena Netzahualcoyotl in Mexico City's largest suburb, the usual main event around the horn headlined here too. Canek, Rambo, and Doctor Wagner junior faced Ricky Santana, el Gigante Warrior, and Miguelito Perez junior. The semifinal saw Eddy Guerrero, Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada, and el Villano III booked to face el Scorpio junior, Shu, el Guerrero, and Jose "el Negro" Casas, who was not there as he worked EMLL's la Arena Mexico card at the same time instead. The tercera saw el Celestial team up with los Cowboys (Silver King and el Texano) to face the traditional la Ola Lila (May Flowers, Pimpinela Escarlata, and Ruffy "Perfumado" Reyna). The segunda saw Transformer and el Tigre Canadiense team up to face Ricky Boy and Casandro. And the inicial found Bat Blue versus Luis Lopez junior. I expect that this card was taped, if not to air right away then at least to put into the can. Since Casas and Ricky Boy were booked on this card but have jumped, I expect neither made the show.

* Saturday, June 6th, saw the usual UWA card at la Arena Isabel in the garden city of Cuernavaca, Morelos. I know of only the main event match scheduled here. It was Canek, el Engendro, and The Black Power II versus Eddy Guerrero, el Villano III, and Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada.

* I also know of only the main event at the other UWA card held Saturday, June 6th. This was held at the tiny la Arena San Juan Pantitlan in the Pantitlan area ("colonia") of the Distrito Federal. It featured a new version of los Exoticos '82 (May Flowers, Casandro, and Pimpinela Escarlata). They faced three-time ex-UWA World Trios Champions las Panteras Rosas (los Villanos I, IV, and V).

* Sunday has the usual card at the "el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos" bull ring in suburban Naucalpan. The main event, as you might expect, featured los Puertorriquenos again. Miguelito Perez junior, Ricky Santana, and el Gigante Warrior teamed to face Canek, Rambo, and Doctor Wagner junior. El Signo and Miguel "el Negro" Navarro of los Nuevos Misioneros de la Muerte were tentatively booked on this card, then they were off on a tour of Guatemala. They also were drafted to accompany "el Chacho" Herodes, Carlos Plata, and Rambo (who works as Sergeant Mendieta on these tours in deference to Luc Poirier who already has the local "Rambo" ring name) on these luchadores' next tour of France and Europe.

* Finally, one other card coming up. On Wednesday, June 10th, 1992, at the "el Palenque de la Feria" Gymnasium in Celaya, Guanajuato, el Hijo del Diablo puts up his mask in the main event versus the hair of Resplandor. My money is betting on el Hijo del Diablo to win that on easily.

* The UWA television show that aired this week on Saturday, June 6th, showed the card from la Arena Netzahualcoyotl held Friday, May 29th. The first television match saw Enrique Vera (who beld a bunch) , Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada, and el Villano III defeat The Black Scorpio, Bam Bam Bigelow, and The Killer (managed by Andy Barrow) two falls to one in a match rated * 1/2. The second TV match saw los Villanos IV and V defeat Doctor Wagner junior and el Espanto junior two falls to one, also * 1/2. The main event saw los Cowboys (Silver King and el Texano), now billed as "los Efectivos", defeat Jose "el Negro" Casas and el Engendro two falls to one. This was a very good match and rated ***. The switch in announcers continued this week as Alcatraz and el Principe Valiente were behind the mike and Alfredo Ruiz had vanished. Overall, this was said not to be a bad show but nothing special, either, as per usual.

AAA

The AAA promoted several cards this weekend as their growth continued unabated. When the original schedule was announced back on May 7th, only one card had been scheduled. That was to be held at el Auditorio Municipal in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico. This aired on Mexico City's channel four (a Televisa outlet) on Sunday, June 7th, at 11:00am local time (equivalent to Denver or MDT time in USA). Late results can be found on page two. The main event at the television taping featured the debut of el Hijo del Santo. Santito had called and held a press conference on Wednesday, June 3, 1992, at the Hotel Nikko in Mexico City, to announce his formal jump from an "independent contractor" to a full-time AAA "employee." In the main, Santito teamed with Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo and la Mascara Sagrada to face the team of Universo Dos Mil (new Mexican National Light Heavyweight Champion), Fishman, and Fuerza Guerrera. The semifinal featured el Volador and el Misterioso again. This time they teamed up with el Solar I to face the "death trio" of Ice Killer, la Parca, and Karis la Momia. Karis la Momia is a new name to me, but I do not for sure that he is, in fact, *not* Johnny Legend. The tercera had Superbowl, Quarterback, and Reptil all make their national television debut by facing el Giro, el Colorado, and Super Star. The segunda, which was off television, had Winners (yeah) again, teaming again this week with Super Calo to face Bleda and Atila junior.

There was another card Friday night as well. The same arena at which they had taped their second show (5/22/92), el Auditorio Jose Maria Arteaga in Queretaro, Queretaro, re-opened its doors to the AAA stars. The main event saw Cien Caras, el Vulcano, and "el Chacho" Herodes face Super Muneco, el Fantasma, and el Angel Azteca. The semifinal was Tony Arce, Rocco Valente, and el Indomito versus Super Raton, Super Pinochio, and Super Halcon (Danny Ortiz). The tercera, which was the only other match I saw listed, was Heavy Metal (Erick Casas), el Picudo, and el Brazo de Platino facing Super Atomo (ex-Robin Hood), el Falcon, and el Galactico (his is a new name to me). I do not have any information on the inicial, the opening match of the card.

And if that weren't enough, the AAA sent both its mini-super-estrellas and its micro-super-estrellas to work a card at the el Cortijo bullring in Mexico City. The minis who worked were el Misteriosito and el Justicierito versus el Piratita Morgan and Jerrito Estrada. The micros who worked (and I think that these six are six of the only seven micros in existence) were Micro Konnan, Micro Volador, and Micro Misterioso versus los Micro Destructores and Micro Fuerza Guerrera. One of the Micro Destructores has a broken arm suffered in training. Micro Konnan used to wrestle as Arturito. Micro Fuerza used to wrestle as la Filly Estrella. And the two healthy Micro Destructores used to wrestle as el Gran Nikolay and el Pequeno Goliath. These micros, real life dwarves, had always been booked out of the UWA office, while the minis were booked out of EMLL; now the AAA has them all. As far as the rest of the el Cortijo card, I just know the rest of the wrestlers who worked were independent wrestlers who work the second-tier little arenas and are not affiliated with a major promotion (yet).

Also on Friday, Octagon and The Blue Panther were sent in to represent the AAA at a card in Tijuana. I have no other details on that match or card, not even the name of the arena in which it was held. AAA wrestlers worked on two independent cards in the Distrito Federal on Saturday, June 6th. At la Arena Xochimilco in Xochimilco, Superbowl, Quarterback, and el Colorado were booked. At la Arena Apatlaco in Mexico City, Fishman, Fuerza Guerrera, and el Fantasma were booked. Also booked at la Arena Apatlaco was The Killer and his manager Andy Barrow from the UWA, but I don't believe at all that The Killer is jumping.

And on Sunday, May 7th, the AAA held a full card at the park called "el Palenque de la Agua Azul" in Guadalajara, Jalisco. The main event was Cien Caras and Universo Dos Mil versus la Mascara Sagrada and el Justiciero. This reminds me to tell everyone that Mascara Ano Dos Mil is still out of action from the knee injury he suffered back on the initial Triple A show from May 15th.

Well, those are their cards for this week, but what of other news? Dave Meltzer in the June 15, 1992 issue of *The Wrestling Observer Newsletter* is reporting that he has learned that four wrestlers from the UWA are jumping to the AAA soon: Ricky Boy, Leon CHino (now working as Katana), Kendo Star, and el Hijo del Santo, who of course has already jumped. Japan's *Weekly Pro Wrestling* magazine also reports that two other wrestlers have signed AAA contracts and are jumping. One is el Espanto junior, who just was crowned the UWA World Welterweight Champion (supposedly in a match versus el Hijo del Santo May 12, 1992, in Gomez Palacios, Durango, although I now suspect that that match was never actually held). The other is a name I have not heard conjectured much about, that being Super Astro. Plus, rumors are that Eddy Guerrero, Rambo, Doctor Wagner junior, May Flowers, and Pimpinela Escarlata are being heavily pursued.

Also, Antonio Pena has squashed plans for several of his stars to work the upcoming Universal tour in Japan. Erick Casas, who would have been billed under his old "el Canelo" nickname, el Misterioso, and el Volador were scheduled to take part in the upcoming tour. I believe that either Misterioso or Volador would have won a tournament to crown a new "Universal Super Welterweight" Champion; in fact, I think the two would have reached the finals and wrestled friend against friend as the Japanese hardcore fans generally seem intrigued by those sort of match-ups. Pena has also expressed "reservations" about Konnan el Barbaro's appearance versus Atsushi Onita in

match-ups. Pena has also expressed "reservations" about Konnan el Barbaro's appearance versus Atsushi Onita in the electrified-fence barbed-wire steel-cage death-match that will be held Saturday, July 4th, at the East Los Angeles College. I do know that Pena has agreed to allow his wrestlers to appear on that card and that card will mark the United States debut of Octagon (which originally was going to be June 14th).

Finally, the biggest news for American fans of Triple A is that they have hit Galavision finally. I feel strongly that you will enjoy the Triple A television show. It is very similar to the EMLL show we have seen for the last few years. It should be. Antonio Pena was the television producer of the EMLL show and now he is the same for the Triple A. The graphics are new and fresh and they have the best commentators and ring announcers. About the commentary—Arturo Rivera is no longer an extremely heavy "heel commentator" and is playing it straight. He is much better this way and better than I have thought he was earlier. And what can you say about Doctor Alfonso Morales? There is not another commentator in wrestling like him—poetic, flowery, and yet always in tune with the match and always getting the key points across. Like most major commentators, he is as much a part of the show as the wrestling. It was a big coup for Pena to get Morales to do his television.

CALIFORNIA

Since I am "in the neighborhood," here is an update on things in LALA land. The FMW/WWA series on May 15th and May 16th was a real big success. It was a surprising success since there was some doubt even four days before the shows that they would even take place. I expect them to do better with a chance for some local build-up. Plus, bringing in bigger Mexican stars will help. I feel strongly that one of the key reason that Triple A owner Antonio Pena wanted el Hijo del Santo so much was because of Santo's popularity in Los Angeles, Tijuana, and the border towns. Anyone who has seen the FMW/WWA tapes can attest to Santito's unreal heat; no doubt that he not only gets crowd heat but draws the crowds as well. I am sure he will be on the July 4th card. I have no other details on that card except for the scheduled main event and that a full cadre of FMW and AAA wrestlers will be there.

This past Wednesday, June 3rd, the FMW and the Triple A signed a formal talent-cooperation contract. This essentially negates the informal working agreement Onita and FMW had with Benjamin Mora junior and his WWA. I do not know the details but apparently Mora really screwed badly in some ways at the Los Angeles and Tijuana joint cards. It seems clear none of the other promoters, from Pena to Onita to the local promoters, want to work with Mora anymore. The AAA then announced that the first AAA Los Angeles card would be held on Saturday, June 14, 1992, at the gymnasium on the campus of The California State University at Los Angeles, with the main event being Cien Caras and Jose "el Negro" Casas teaming to face Konnan el Barbaro and el Cobarde II. Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo and los micro-super-estrellas are also booked for the 14th. I guess what this will mean is that Yukihide Ueno, who wrestles as el Ultra Tiger or as el Kamikaze Ninja, plus Akihito Iohihara, plus el Pandita, and maybe even Eiji Ezaki will be sent occasionally from the FMW camp to work some AAA shows. I doubt if too many Mexicans will work FMW tours although you never know. I do get the impression that Triple A head Antonio Pena is not a big fan of the FMW blood and guts style, especially the heavy gimmick matches. Actually though, the all-brawl feuds that Cien Caras and his brothers were having with Aguayo and Konnan at la Arena Mexico in March, with the use of blood, chairs, and brawling in the stands, was not far away from Onita's standard "street fight" match. I understand Pena, not Konnan, okayed the scenario for Universo Dos Mil's title change win last week on television and that was not far away from an Onita-style all-out brawl. The end result of this paragraph is that both AAA and on occasion FMW wrestlers will be working California fairly regularly, and WWA wrestlers won't be.

In fact, on Thursday, June 4, 1992, Antonio Pena announced in a joint "communique" with the promoter of the Olympic Auditorium, Edgar Fajardo, that in about 30 days, the AAA and Fajardo would be running regular cards again at the Olympic. I do know the Olympic has undergone since last year an extensive renovation. I believe Pena wants to make that, and not the Cal State-Los Angeles gym, his "Los Angeles base." Since July 4th is already booked, I would expect that a target date in Pena's mind for the first Olympic card would be about Saturday, July 18th. I would further expect both Octagon and el Hijo del Santo to be regulars, at least until the fan base is built. Since Galavision is also channel 22 in Los Angeles, with its own satellite feed, I'm sure Pena sees the channel 22 just as a regular weekly Los Angeles television show, and no doubt could (if he wanted to and he should) insert localized promos for the "next big card" at the Olympic. Once AAA starts airing locally in Los Angeles, he'd be a fool not to.

And what does this do to the Los Angeles independents? Jalisco Promotions is currently running Saturday nights in Chino and Sunday nights at The All Nations Center in East Los Angeles. Sergio Garcia runs Saturdays and Sundays also, the latter an afternoon card in San Bernardino. Will the fact that the local promotions aim at such a small, local fan base (200-300 per show) mean that there is little effect? Or will the presence of the big boys on Saturday nights just kill the local promotions' Saturday shows and seriously hurt the Sunday shows? Are there that many Hispanic lucha libre fans around? In Mexico City, a city with roughly twice the population of greater Los Angeles (scary), there ~~are~~ plenty enough fans to go around. Los Angeles has been so untested in this regards that all I can do is ask the questions. If I were a local promoter though, I'd be sure to build up a rematch on *every* show.

counted out of the ring. The rudos also won the second fall in a total domination style when la Bestia Salvaje pinned one of the Metales with his new finisher, the one he beat Kato Kung Lee 1 with in the hair match in March at la Arena Mexico, the diving senton from off of the top rope. This was said to be a good match, *** , but almost a squash match, as if the Metales were leaving the promotion (and Bronce has been heavily courted by the AAA).

The television show then went to a commercial. When they came back, the rudos for the next match had come to the ring, led by captain el Brazo de Oro. The rudos from the last match had not quite left and suddenly Sangre Chicana turns on el Brazo de Oro, beating him senseless. The other two rudos for the semifinal, Pierroth junior and Jose "el Negro" Casas, come to the ring but do nothing to help el Brazo de Oro. Finally, CHicana leaves and we go to another commercial. When we return, the tecnico team of Lizmark, el Dandy, and el Faraon enter the ring. The tecnicos win the first fall with Dandy and Casas looking good together. During the intermission and into the beginning of the second fall, Pierroth junior gets disgusted at el Brazo de Oro and he turns on him too. Finally, the faces save el Brazo de Oro. To end the match, Pierroth junior goes up for a hurracarana on el Faraon, who blocks the move and turns it into a power bomb. Then, Casas is held up on Lizmark's shoulders and el Dandy comes off the top rope with a big chop and a cover for the fall and the match. To wrap things up, once again Pierroth junior and Casas pound away after the match on el Brazo de Oro, who is again saved by Lizmark, el Dandy, and el Faraon. And so it appears that el Brazo de Oro and likely all of los Brazos have been turned babyface. Rated at ***. 1/4 and called the best match on the show as well.

The main event saw Atlantis, Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense, and captain el Rayo de Jalisco junior defeat los Nuevos Infernales (M. S. 1, el Satanico, and captain el Pirata Morgan) in three falls. The finish of the third fall saw a very similar finishing sequence to the match of three weeks ago. Morgan lifts Rayo up for a body slam, Rayo shifts his weight, and the body slam is turned into a small package. This time, however, Morgan gets his foot draped over the bottom rope, but the referee does not see it and counts the three count anyway. No break-up or arguments after the match between Satanico and Morgan, but now it appears that Morgan can defend his honor versus either el Satanico or el Rayo de Jalisco junior. Morgan ripped at Rayo's mask and Rayo bled during the second fall, which makes me think that the EMLL may do a Rayo mask versus Morgan hair match, which would be a much bigger draw than a Morgan hair versus Satanico hair match. Rated at ***.

AAA TELEVISION

First, not to spoil things, but here is what will air on next week's television show. Three matches aired from a card taped Friday, June 5, 1992, at "el Auditorio Municipal" in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico.

The television opener saw Super Star, el Giro, and el Colorado defeat Superbowl, Quarterback, and el Reptil two falls to one. Superbowl wore his shoulder pads in the first fall, which the rudos won. The referees made Superbowl take off his pads between intermission. The tecnicos came back in the second fall with monkey flips, dives, and planchas. The third fall was evenly contested. El Colorado did a plancha over the top rope and missed Superbowl whom he was aiming for, landing neck first on the carpeted-but-still-concrete ringside floor. Super Star made el Reptil submit to the "el swastika," a combination abdominal stretch and Inoki-style octopus hold. Rated at ***.

The semifinal saw the "trio de la muerte" rudos team of Ice Killer, Karis la Momia, and la Parca upset the far better known tecnico team of el Volador, el Misterioso, and el Solar 1 when captain la Parca pinned captain el Solar 1 clean as a sheet in the third fall with a surprise small package. This was said also to be good, and was rated at ***.

The main event saw a successful debut for el Hijo del Santo. He teamed as expected with la Mascara Sagrada and Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo to defeat Universo Dos Mil, Fishman, and Fuerza Guerrera in three falls. The finish of the third fall was an automatic disqualification as senior AAA referee Pepe "Tropi" Casas saw Universo Dos Mil unmask la Mascara Sagrada. El Hijo del Santo did one of his most spectacular sequences in this match. He dove with a rolling diving somersault headbutt onto one opponent in the ring, rolled on through and came up running, and ran two steps before leaping through the second and third ropes for a "tope suicida" onto Fuerza Guerrera. An amazing sequence. This, also, was said to be a very good match, and was also rated at ***. We'll all get to rate them ourselves next week.

The AAA also aired a "Cartometro del Ring," using the same familiar graphics from before. Lead tecnicos were Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo and Octagon. Lead rudos were Cien Caras and Fuerza Guerrera. Top Minis were la Mascarita Sagrada and el Espectrito (junior). Top Micros were Micro Konnan el Barbaro and Micro Fuerza Guerrera. The top pareja was el Misterioso and el Volador. The top trio was los Hermanos Dinamita (Cien Caras, Mascara Ano Dos Mil, and Universo Dos Mil). The "lance" for the previous week was the dive Winnners did in the first match that aired on Galavision this week. And the "relevante" was Universo Dos Mil's winning the Mexican National Light Heavyweight Championship. By the way, both this show and the EMLL show that went up on satellite this week were only ninety minutes long, apparently. I don't know if that's a trend or if we just missed the first match because of the unusual (it varies every week) satellite scheduling. I'll know more on that next week, too.

all I can do at this point is to ask the questions rhetorically. If I were a local promoter, though, I would be sure to try to run some kind of match or angle or something at every show that gives the fans a reason to come back and buy a ticket to the next show. I figure that is crucial for the small-time promotions in a battle like this.

And speaking of the local promotions, thanks to reader Dan Farren of Reseda, California, I have a report of a small show held Thursday, June 4, 1992, in Reseda, at Tony Longball's Country Club. Attendance was a little over 100, which is up a bit from last time. The inicial saw el Pandita and el Ultra Tiger (Yukihide Ueno) team up to defeat Akhito Ichihara and el CHicano Terror. Terror is a veteran who was there to help the FMW rookies adjust to the lucha libre style and to help guide them along in their match. The segunda saw el CHamaco Rebelde defeat el Metalico. The tercera, la encuentra especial, saw el Rey Misterio II, who used to wrestle as Colibri and is said to be spectacular, defeating local maestro el Salvaje. The semifinal saw a trio tag match, en relevos australianos. The winners were the rudos: los Mercenarios Americanos (Billy Anderson and Tim Patterson) and their partner, Genghis Khan. They defeated Bull Raiders (aka el Rey Misterio), Ultraman Dos Mil, and The Lover Boy two falls to one. The finish of the second fall saw Billy Anderson fouling all three tecnicos with low-blow head-butts for the automatic disqualification. Bull Raiders was quite upset at this and in the third fall when Anderson began to do the same stuff, Raiders fouled Anderson, was caught, and was disqualified. At that point, Raiders surprisingly stalked off in a huff while the other five brawled in the ring. Genghis Khan, by the way, who lost his mask in Japan to Ultraman Dos Mil on May 24th, wrestled with the mask in this match. Billy Anderson and Ultraman Dos Mil are setting up a barbed-wire match down the road. The main event saw Super Star junior upset Mando Guerrero two falls to one. Mando was disqualified for fouling Superstar in desperation in the third fall, also with a head butt foul. Mando looked great, again, and did a nice senton to win the second fall clean. One other note: former UCLA and Denver Nugget basketball star Brad Wright was on hand and in the ring to award a raffle prize, when local wrestler Budo Khan entered the ring and the two started jawing. Wright got over well since he speaks Spanish and was cheered. The two will have a match soon. All in all, this was said to be a good card, with angles and hot action, and surprisingly so considering the attendance. La Opinion Los Angeles's daily Spanish-language newspaper, ran a blurb about the card but it just came out the day of the show, so not much time was available for fans to know about the card. The promoters also placed an ad in the sports section.

No late news this week as a new job has me working late Tuesday and Wednesday nights, when the late news arrives, so this is being given to the printers on Monday, June 8th, and being mailed on Tuesday, June 9th. Bye til next week.

From: LUCHA LIBRE WEEKLY

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 16

TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 1992

c/o STEPHEN H. SIMS

1427 WEST DICKENS AVENUE

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60614-3003

(312)477-3996

PAID TO ISSUE _____